

1. Select Variable Frequencies for FY2003 Medical SAS Data on Web

The *VIREC Research User Guide: FY2003 Select Variable Frequencies from the VHA Medical SAS Datasets*, recently been posted to the VIREC Web site, contains frequencies for 24 variables in the Outpatient data and 39 variables in the inpatient data. The PDF file of more than 750 KB can be downloaded from <http://www.virec.research.med.va.gov/References/RUG/RUG.htm>.

2. FY2004 DSS National Data Extracts Technical Guidebook Released

The Database section of the Decision Support Office (formerly the DSS Program Office) has announced release of the *DSS National Data Extracts (NDE) Technical Guidebook*, which provides technical details on the extraction of data from VistA that is the basis of all of the DSS national SAS[®] datasets (Discharge, Treating Specialty, Outpatient, Laboratory Tests, Laboratory Results, Pharmacy, Radiology, and Account Level Budgeter). The FY2004 guidebook is on the VA Intranet at <http://vaww.dss.med.va.gov/index.asp> (use links for “National Reporting,” “National Data Extracts,” and “NDE Technical Manuals”).

3. New Stroke QUERI Web Site

The new Stroke QUERI has launched an Internet Web site (Intranet site to come) that includes a link to the Functional Status Outcomes Database (FSOD). The site presents information and resources for researchers in the area of stroke. See <http://www1.va.gov/stroke-queri/>.

4. New Advisory Board Replaces DSS National Steering Committee

The June-July 2004 issue of the *DSS Matters* newsletter reports that the Decision Support Office has replaced the DSS National Steering Committee with the new DSO Advisory Board. The board comprises representatives of VHA Central Office, National Leadership Board (NLB) Finance Committee, NLB Health Systems Management Committee and NLB Informatics and Data Management Committee, Networks, and Veterans Affairs Medical Centers. Additional functional representation may be added on an as-needed basis to provide technical or content expertise. See the *DSS Matters* newsletter on the VA Intranet at <http://vaww.dss.med.va.gov/index.asp> (use links for “News and Events” and “Newsletter”).

5. New Version of Clinical Reminders Software

The Health Systems Design & Development newsletter, *HSD&D Info Bytes*, announces the August 2004 release of the Clinical Reminders Global Index and Clinical Reminders V2.0. The Index will support rapid access to VistA data in Clinical Reminders, Inpatient and Outpatient Pharmacy, Laboratory, Mental Health, Order Entry/Results Reporting (OE/RR), Patient Care Encounter (PCE), Pharmacy Data Management (PDM), PIMS/Scheduling, Problem List, Radiology, and Vitals. The new version of clinical reminders software, to be released in September 2004, is described as supporting national rollup of data from the national clinical reminders created by the Ischemic Heart Disease and Mental Health QUERI groups. *HSD&D Info Bytes* is on the Intranet at http://vaww.vista.med.va.gov/hdr/Release_of_Clinical_Reminders.pdf.

6. QUERI Papers in *Journal of American Medical Informatics Association*

An effort initiated and coordinated by VIREC as part of its funded consultation with QUERI has resulted in acceptance of six manuscripts by the *Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association* (JAMIA). The papers, which address informatics and QUERI activities, will appear in the September 2004 issue of *JAMIA*. Pre-prints are now on the *JAMIA* Web site <http://www.jamia.org/preprints.shtml> for:

- Goldstein MK, Coleman RW, Tu SW, et al. Translating research into practice: Sociotechnical integration of automated decision support for hypertension in three medical centers.
- Hynes DM, Perrin RA, Rappaport S, Stevens JM, Demakis JG. Informatics resources to support health care quality improvement in the Veterans Health Administration.
- McQueen L, Mittman BS, Demakis JG. Overview of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI).
- Owen RR, Thrush CR, Cannon D, et al. Use of electronic medical record data for quality improvement in schizophrenia treatment.
- Weaver FM, Hatzakis M, Evans CT, et al. A comparison of multiple data sources to identify vaccinations for veterans with spinal cord injuries and disorders.
- Young AS, Mintz J, Cohen AN, Chinman MJ. A network-based system to improve care for schizophrenia: The Medical Informatics Network Tool (MINT).

7. VA Organizational Briefing Book Online

The May 2004 *Organizational Briefing Book* of the Department of Veterans Affairs is now available on the Internet. The book contains VA facility counts (e.g., hospitals, nursing homes, outpatient clinics), a profile of the veteran population (e.g., age, sex, education, income), and summary budget information. See the *Organizational Briefing Book* at <http://www.va.gov/ofcadmin/orgbrfbook.pdf>.

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